

but splendid galleries of that old palace. What must have been his feelings on revisiting the chamber in which, the year before, it is said he had attempted suicide!¹

Louis XVIII. left the Palace of the Tuilleries at nearly the same hour that Bonaparte entered that of Fontainebleau.

The most forlorn hope of the Bourbons was now in a considerable army posted between Fontainebleau and Paris. Meantime the two armies approached each other at Melun; that of the King was commanded by Marshal Macdonald. On the 20th his troops were drawn up in three lines to receive the invaders, who were said to be advancing from Fontainebleau. There was a long pause of suspense, of a nature which seldom fails to render men more accessible to strong

¹ Baron. Fain thus relates this report: —

"On the night of the 12th the silence which reigned in the long corridors of the palace was suddenly interrupted by the sound of hurried footsteps. The servants of the palace were heard running to and fro, candles were lighted in the inner apartment, and the *valets de chambre* were called up. Doctor Yvan and the Grand Marshal Betrand were also summoned. The Duke of Vicenza was sent for, and a message was despatched to the Duke of Bassano, who resided at the Chancellerie. All these individuals arrived, and were successively introduced into the Emperor's bedchamber. Curiosity in vain lent an anxious ear; nothing was heard but groans and sobs escaping from the antechamber and resounding through the gallery. At length Yvan came out of the chamber; he hastily descended into the courtyard where, finding a horse fastened to the railing, he mounted him and galloped off. The secret of this night has always been involved in profound obscurity. The following story has, however, been related: —

"During the retreat from Moscow Napoleon had, in case of accident, taken means to prevent his falling alive into the hands of the enemy. He procured from his surgeon Yvan a bag of opium,* which he wore hung about his neck as long as danger was to be apprehended. He afterwards carefully deposited this bag in a secret drawer of his cabinet. On the night of the 12th he thought the moment had arrived for availing himself of this last expedient. The *raid de chambre*, who slept in the adjoining room, the door of which was half open, heard Napoleon empty something into a glass of water, which he drank, and then returned to bed. Pain soon extorted from him an acknowledgment of his approaching end. He then sent for the most confidential persons in his service. Yvan was sent for also; but learning what had occurred, and hearing Napoleon complain that the poison was not sufficiently quick in its effect, he lost all self-possession, and hastily fled from Fontainebleau. It is added that Napoleon fell into a long sleep, and that after copious perspiration every alarming symptom disappeared. The dose was either insufficient in quantity or time had mitigated the power of the poison. It is said that Napoleon, astonished at the failure of his attempt, after some moments of reflection said, 'God has ordained that I shall live!' and yielding to the will of Providence, which had preserved his existence, he resigned himself to a new destiny. The whole affair was hushed in secrecy."

* It was not opium alone, but a preparation described by Cabanis, and the same which Condorcet made use of to destroy himself.